



Horn-O-Plenty

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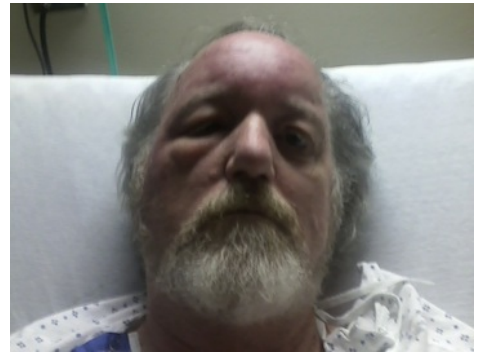
6 pages / 2303 words / un-numbered chapters / 12 point Liberation Serif / Three photographic image – page 1 – taken by the author

Synopsis:

Autobiographical; an injury leads to four years of mild concern until the injury decides it's time to make it's play. A little on the difficult side when enduring the descriptions of infections, et al, written in a fairly astute voice with indications said voice is overcompensating.

Topics:

- Separation / marriage
- Children
- Hospitalization
- Collecting in particular animal skulls
- symptoms of a severe fever left unattended
- Stealth brought on by embarrassment
- Hippie ethics



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S. LaRue – 11/2013

I'd done what my thinky-parts told me was the right thing, considering my being a white-man and all. I'd had a couple of children with this goofball lady, which kinda pointed to me being pretty goofy too. But I stuck it out; stayed with her and the children until they were grown. My upbringing was such, that were I to allow it's repetition, even slightly, would surely find me in the job placement program in Hell.

My progeny had heard enough vastly differing opinions to keep them busy assigning levels of veracity for quite some time, were of ample age to make their own way on our little spherical sewer, and this had been accomplished with a modicum of cage rattling. A few knees got skinned, smoldering train wreckage was not visible, yet I came away from the experience sans trophy. I remain unsurprised.

When I left, I was looking pretty good for an old geezer, and even had a few frog pelts floatin' around. I'd been, what's only recently become known as "a picker" in the popular American vernacular, since I was 16 years old, but didn't see myself in that spotlight afforded those bearing said moniker while performing the difficult tasks around "buying stuff" when it's featured on television.

I was on the verge of starting a website devoted to antique, one-of-a-kind, handcrafted Native American Jewelry. While I was out and about filling my shopping cart with that stuff, all manner of desirable items happened into my possession. Where there was open market style trading going on, it was highly probable I'd attend, grab what I thought would turn a handy profit, regardless of the genre, and move on to the next gathering of hapless traders.

This allowed for an easily accessible way to prime the pumps for future sales—even if I bagged the website idea and went the antique mall route again, I'd have plenty of stock. A terrific side effect was, I got to add to the collections of things I kept for myself; cast metal cars from the Muscle Car Era, music memorabilia, unusual art, strange musical instruments, furniture of noteworthy design and I could never resist an animal skull in great condition, especially if all the teeth and antlers were present, if the critter had them in the first place. Even had a house cat once, and before you turn up yer nose, please note: somebody walked off with it—that's how

interesting it was.

So, there I was, a born-again bachelor. I still wanted to spend time with the children, but apparently, if the goofball lady was to remain categorized as such, she was granted “underdog status” by the children, was crowned the “Voice of Reason” concerning she and I’s awkward interaction history, while my accurate, sage-like recounting of same, was quickly filed under “void,” prior to a bare minimum of examination. Took a bit to warm up to that nonsense, but whatcha gonna do? People think what they wanna think—truth seldom enjoys a place in that equation.

I got a living space I really liked, got it set up the way I’d always wanted my swingin’ bachelor pad to look, and took to entertaining regular-like. Mostly just having people over for BBQs and musical gatherings, movie night, stuff like that.

In the process of decking out my hip new digs, I’d hung a rather impressive elk skull—complete with 10-point rack—in my bedroom. Didn’t notice I’d hung it too low until a week or so later; I leaned over to pick up the laundry hamper and my right temple met with one of the points, causing a considerable wound, plenty of blood, and my uncontrollable laughter for several minutes.

Subsequent years found the elk skull positioned higher and higher on various walls, until it made it’s way to the front porch, hanging probably seven feet up—well out of harm’s way. But the wound caused by slamming my head into it, never really healed—it hinted at it from time to time, but never achieved a standing other than “open wound” for the following four years, and it was not a lack of care on my part that kept it from it’s goal.

At one point I’d begun courting a woman with an educational background. Clever and attractive, one of her few drawbacks was an undying belief in a set of hippie-cultural edicts, one of which being, antibiotics are a “bad thing,” so much so, she wouldn’t let Neosporin touch her skin without wincing at the perceived bad karma she was inviting by killing helpless bacteria thru modern scientific methods. This pretty much went hand-in-hand with another of her beliefs that “the body will take care of itself,” and her near insistence I leave the elk wound to it’s own, naturally curative processes. She was cute, and smart, so I followed her advice.

A few months later her “smart” attributes won some ongoing internal feud, with me at it’s core, and she made herself scarce, but not before offering a few rather frightening psychiatric diagnoses of your humble narrator, that have since been exposed as the severely misdirected application of harsh labels, the meanings of which, could not have been firmly grasped due to her lack of Doctoral Degrees in the field of mental health. Odd that she would opine in that arena, in such detail, when a, “Yer Crazy!” would have gotten the job done quite handily. Had me shaking my head for a few minutes...

Somewhere along the way, I got some “hippie” spilled on me too and after a few attempts to wrest free whatever had taken up residence in my forehead after my ill-fated elk impalement, rendered zero results, I decided to let my body do what it felt was right; I kept it clean, applied

the dreaded Neosporin once in a while, and let the thought of seeing a dermatologist float by, in the form of a pipe-smoking, stethoscope-clad, mustachioed, bespectacled cumulus cloud, never once demanding action on my part.

When the silent explosion subsided, I quickly cleaned the voluminous pink ooze left in its wake, and continued with the project I was focused on, giving but a moments thought to what had been preparing for such a crescendo for over four years—I was busy and if something had been expelled from my body, I'd devote some data processing time to it later.

“Later” turned out to be a couple of hours, but the focal point had not been the aged open wound referred to. An unusual fever-type feeling had taken hold of my core, resembling what one experiences during the occasional caffeine overdose. I chugged a quart of water, had a few cigarettes, washed my face, considered the matter closed, and went back to my project.

A couple more hours passed and I found myself turning up the heat and looking for my bathrobe, which once dawned, heard my noggin-chimp asking, “What the fuck? It's hot in here, and what's with the blasting heater?” Thus a continuous internal discussion began around body temperature, environmental factors and why they appeared to be at odds one moment, and in harmony the next.

Over time, this discussion culminated in a rather dramatic re-direction, with the subject line changing from indoor weather and it's currently unusual effects, to a brainstorming session aimed at discovering the origin(s) of my body's recent tendency to shake violently, relieving me of my keyboard wrangling skills, hence bringing my project's completion into question.

Perplexed, I made my way to the bathroom mirror and inspected the area which had, a few hours earlier, silently popped, in hopes of finding something other than what I observed. The elk wound had grown smaller in size, not when considering it's opening, but when the “mound” on which it had been positioned was discovered to have vanished, in what I concluded, was it deciding the time was ripe for it to erupt, throw the elk horn deposit of some years earlier across the room, and call it a day.

A subsequent thorough search found no such projectile, yet the wound had visibly weakened—it's muscular appearance had transformed after it's long awaited orgasm, and it now lay flaccid in stature, yet its eye showed no hint of closing. One might expect such an arduous journey would lend itself to a long and well deserved nap.

My project had been scrapped, and my attention turned to possible home-remedies for a bad natured fever that couldn't make up it's mind whether to cover me in sweat, or turn that sweat into a sheet of ice. The hour had grown late, I hadn't eaten for the better part of two days, and with my new-found bodily malfunctions, I chose to get some sleep. Having abandoned the recreational use of drugs and alcohol many months previous, left me with ibuprofen and a fizzie-shot of raspberry lemonade flavored magnesium to aid me in achieving my goal.

I woke 5 hours later due to my body convulsing and a burning sensation in/on/around my right

ear. I'd slept fully clothed with my robe on, and after emptying my bladder, with some aim difficulty due to the increased earthquake within me, I noticed what looked like a wet, dark red, first baseman's glove, where my ear used to be, while looking in the mirror. It was kind of hard to make out as the heat emanating from it caused considerable distortion in the image.

I wrote this off to having spent too long with the ear-goggles. I do a lot of sound work, and had worn them for no less than 15 hours the previous day. I have a set of Bang & Olufsen's which are pre-earbud aged, yet are earbud-like in design, fairly uncomfortable and have been known to irritate during long periods of use. I just thought I'd over-done it more than usual.

The next 15 hours were spent trying to establish a position, a temperature and a beneficial layering of clothes that might bring, my now out-of-control shaking, into some manageable state. This was not accomplished, nor was nourishment taken other than water and perhaps some candy. During this time the moaning of explicatives grew in regularity and intensity, finally achieving a constant. I'd try to work, fail, pace, moan, drink water, and start the cycle over. I know what denial is, but failed to recognize it, due to, what I'm assuming was, a high fever. I eventually collapsed, still fully clothed and having the good fortune to be near my bed.

I woke in the early afternoon, soaking wet. Upon seeing myself in the mirror, and making note of the frighteningly enlarged right side of my face, I chose to seek the opinion of a human other than myself—the cat acted as though nothing were amiss and went about requesting sustenance as is his usual routine.

I was temporarily isolated at the emergency room while blood tests were run to rule out the possible presence of necrotizing fasciitis. Once that was established, a fast-paced ballet of activity ensued, landing me in the unsympathetic hands of the night staff at a local hospital that will remain nameless.

There I would spend the next four days, bathed in various combinations of antibiotics and neglect, as I literally watched the infection travel across the haggard landscape of my face, distorting, repositioning, expanding and mangling the underlying tissues, rendering my outward appearance as that of the most displeasing of Hollywood monsters, where “reality” was the basis for its creation. The constant changes were just grotesque enough, you could tell there was once a person's face there, yet the level of disfiguration was so perfectly crafted, upon viewing, you could easily imagine the pain associated and yes, even wager a guess at the horrors such a terrible face had witnessed to deserve such a fate.

With surrender and acceptance being paramount in my overall view of requirements for occupying a body, that is exactly what I did. I slept or remained hidden during the day, sparing others the pain of seeing me, and undertook any necessary endeavors when all was quiet. I didn't expect, nor did I encourage anyone to visit, and when the time came for my discharge, I managed it quickly, silently and made my way home unescorted.

The key was under the ceramic frog in the garden, where I'd left it for my landlord, I entered, fed the cat, took a quick shower, and went to re-orient myself with the project I had left

unfinished. My muse was waiting and as is the attitude of all which hold that position, patience is little more than a concept.